

**Prepared Remarks of Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission**

“Generation Mobile” Forum

**McKinley Technology High School
Washington, D.C.
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Thank you to the students of McKinley Tech for welcoming us today.

I also want to thank all of the panelists and the parents, educators, and members of the community who are in the audience.

We have a great discussion ahead of us -- so I'll be brief.

Let me ask a few questions of the students here.

First, how many of you are looking forward to winter break?

How many of you are looking forward to the finals you have to take before break starts?

How many of you use the Internet in connection with your finals, or homework, or other schoolwork?

How many of you think you'll need basic digital skills -- Internet skills -- to get a good job?

Here's one. How many of you know that broadband means high-speed Internet?

Broadband is the most transformational new technology since electricity. It's changing not only the way students do homework, not only the way people do their jobs -- but virtually every aspect our lives.

The opportunities of broadband Internet are almost limitless. Just imagine. A student anywhere can have access to the best libraries, the best teachers, the best tutors in the world. And instead of carrying 50 pounds of textbooks in your backpacks, you can have a digital textbook, with up-to-date materials and cutting-edge interactive learning tools.

Broadband can help transform health care for the better. Patients can have access to specialist doctors, even if that specialist is on the other side of the country. Smartphones can help people with diabetes track their glucose levels; they can empower real-time monitoring by their doctors.

How about energy? With broadband, the appliances in our homes will be able to talk to each other, saving energy, saving money, and saving our planet.

The Internet enables anyone, anywhere to dream big and bring those dreams to life.

One thing we need to do to seize the opportunities of broadband is to preserve the freedom and openness of the Internet.

Mark Zuckerberg was only a few years older than you when he invented Facebook in his dorm room. Sergey Brin, who went to school right up the road at Maryland, was in his early 20s when he co-founded Google. Neither of them had to ask permission to launch their websites, and if any of you want to follow your dreams online, you shouldn't have to either.

That's why the FCC is moving to preserve the open Internet. It's a vital part of what we need to do to unleash innovation and protect free speech, to foster broadband investment and promote a vibrant economy creating great jobs for students like you.

And that's why it's essential that we move forward next week to adopt the first enforceable rules of the road to protect Internet freedom -- and why I'm so pleased to have broad support for the effort from across the spectrum, including the tech community, leading venture and other investors, carriers, labor, and civil rights organizations.

And we need to make sure that all of our young people -- no matter where they're from -- have access to the Internet, and have the digital skills necessary to be full participants in our digital economy and 21st century democracy.

And for our country to be competitive in this new world, we're looking to schools like McKinley Tech to equip students with more than just basic skills.

We need to lead the world in what people call the STEM subjects -- Science, Technology, Engineering, Math. And this school is doing so much toward that goal.

Now, I have another question for you. Since I've started speaking, how many of you have checked your phones for texts or emails?

How many of you were tempted to do that?

Here's the thing: As with every revolutionary new technology, broadband Internet brings not only massive opportunities, but some concerns.

One study found that the average teenager consumes 11 hours of media content ... a day.

Another found that teenagers text so often it comes to one every 14 minutes.

We all understand "the lure of distraction," in the words of a compelling recent *New York Times* article that described the challenges of new technologies.

And we also know how some texts or online messages can be hurtful

This all can have real consequences -- consequences for schoolwork, consequences for friendships and relationships. Consequences for careers.

And consequences that literally can be life or death. Eighty percent of fatal teen car accidents are caused by distracted driving. That's a tragedy we have to tackle. I have three kids. One's a 19-year-old driver. I want him to have a mobile phone in a car accident, but I don't want him texting and driving. So don't text and drive. I commend Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood for leading that effort.

Those are just some of the issues our panelists will discuss today.

I'm so glad we're holding this forum, and doing it here at McKinley. I'm here today to learn from students, parents, educators, and experts on what we can do to seize the opportunities of broadband Internet, while avoiding these pitfalls.

This isn't about government regulation. It's about responsibility. It's about information and education. It's about empowerment -- empowering parents and students with resources and tools to navigate the digital age.

And it's about providing a boost to innovators -- to business innovators and social innovators developing new products -- products and tools that can help parents and students with the challenge of having limits, and also with identifying quality educational digital content.

Now, to kick-start today's discussion, we're lucky to have a very special guest -- Emmy-Award Winning actress Jane Lynch, who was nominated for a Golden Globe this morning. You all know her from the hit show Glee. And that's just the latest in a series of great performances in TV and film, including one of my all-time favorite movies: Best in Show.

Jane Lynch is bringing her trademark humor to the issue of responsible mobile usage through her involvement in the LG Text Ed program.

In her role as member of the LG Text Ed Council, Jane is tackling issues such as sexting, texting while driving, and mobile bullying -- all of which we're going to be talking about as the day goes on.

I'm now delighted to welcome via Skype award-winning actress -- and recovering text offender -
- Jane Lynch.